

R E A S O N S

F O R T H E

Passing of the B I L L

F O R T H E

More Effectual Suppressing

Vice & Immorality,

Humbly Offer'd to

Both Houses of Parliament.

The Second Edition, with Additions.

L O N D O N,

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REPORT

OF THE

COMMISSIONERS OF THE LAND OFFICE

IN RESPONSE TO A RESOLUTION OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

PASSED MAY 10, 1850

AND

IN RESPONSE TO A RESOLUTION OF THE SENATE

PASSED MAY 10, 1850

AND

IN RESPONSE TO A RESOLUTION OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

PASSED MAY 10, 1850

REASONS

FOR THE

Passing of the BILL

FOR THE

More Effectual Suppressing

Vice and Immorality, &c.

ONE would think it should be a needless Undertaking in a Christian State, to give Reasons for the Passing of a Bill which it is scarcely possible for any Man that would be accounted a Christian to offer the least Reason against. But the common Degeneracy in this Age and Nation being such as is hardly to be parallell'd in any History, whatever some may think, makes it too necessary. Therefore I humbly crave leave to lay before the Members of both Houses such Considerations as, with Submission, I conceive, will incline them to believe it not a thing indifferent, whether this *Bill* shall pass, or no.

And first, if we consider the Character which the Sins of *Uncleanness* do bear in Holy Writ, it is plain that those who will own this to be a Revelation from God, must think them to be of the most criminal Nature, and such as will subject those, who live in the Practice of such Sins, to eternal Damnation; from which nothing can save them but Repentance and Amendment of Life. I will select but one or two of those Texts out of the many that might be produc'd to this purpose. The Apostle tells us, *Heb. 13. 4.* That *Whoremongers and Adulterers God will judge.* And lest any should be deluded into false Hopes or slight Thoughts of this Matter, by the Sophistry of prophane Wits, he warns us all, *Eph. 5. 6.* *1 Cor. 6. 9.* Let no Man deceive you with vain Words; assuring it for a certain Truth, that neither Fornicators, nor Adulterers, nor Effeminate Persons, nor Abusers of themselves with Mankind, shall Inherit the Kingdom of God. And therefore does seriously exhort those he writes to, to Mortifie their Members which are upon the Earth; Fornication, Uncleanness, evil Concupiscence; for which Sins, he tells us, *Col. 3. 5.* the Wrath of God cometh upon the Children of Disobedience.

And

And indeed one may easily conclude there is a greater Contrariety to the Will of God in those Sins, than most others, from this, that the very Approaches to *Uncleanness* are more nicely guarded than to any other kind of Vices. It is only by the Eye, the Hand, or the Ear, that this Devil can enter into the Soul; and if either of these Sentinels, the very *Right-Eye*, or *Right-Hand*, should offer to betray us, our great Law-giver strictly commands the one to be *pluckt out*, and the other to be *cut off*; and backs it with this Reason, that it is a piece of Violence most highly profitable that these Members should rather perish, than that the whole Body should be cast into Hell, *Matt. 5. 29, 30.* And then as for the *Evil Communication* from the Tongue, which above all, does corrupt good Manners, the Apostle strictly commands; That *Fornication*, and all *Uncleanness* should not be so much as once Named amongst us as becometh Saints; *Ephes. 5. 3.* And adds, *vers. 4.* Neither *Filthiness*, nor foolish Talking, nor *Jesting*, which are not convenient: An Admonition which I cannot but wish all Christians would seriously consider, and then *Obscenity* would not pass, as it does with too many, for a *Jest*, and filthy Talk would be Banisht out of all Conversation.

And why a heavier Damnation, and a stricter Caution should be given against these Sins than any other, will not seem strange to any one that reflects upon the fatal Consequences of these Crimes, as well with respect to our condition in this World, as in the World which is to come.

As to the World to come, the Texts already cited do sufficiently shew that Exclusion from the Presence of God, and the Kingdom of Heaven, together with a fearful Doom to the dreadful Miseries of another Place, will be the certain Sentence of such Sinners; and the Reason is plain to any one that has right apprehensions of the Holiness of God, and of the Purity of Heaven.

A Soul debased with inordinate Lust, is thereby so unqualified for Communion with God, that the *Heathens* could not but see it; who therefore requir'd, that all who would be admitted to their Mysteries should first be Purg'd with such Rites as they Instituted for that purpose. They were sensible it was not for the Honour of their Gods, that Men who were not thoroughly distinguish'd from Beasts, should come to keep them company. How much more strictly then will it be requir'd by the Author of our Salvation, who has design'd us for the Blessed Estate in which we
are

are to be like him, and with him, that whosoever has any hope of this should *purifie himself as he is pure?*

And indeed, as there is an utter Antipathy between a Sensual and a Divine Mind, and therefore, *as Blessed are the pure in Heart, for they shall see God;* so, on the contrary, consider Heaven, and you will find from the Nature of the thing, as well as from the Testimony of Scripture, that into that place *no Unclean thing can enter.* Light and Darkness, Heaven and Hell, are not at a wider distance than Purity and Uncleanness; so that there is a natural Impossibility that a Soul should be Saved so utterly indisposed and unqualified for it.

Nor are the Consequences of the Sins of Uncleanness less fatal to Mankind, *with respect to this Life;* and this under what Capacity soever we consider them, whether in their private Capacity, or with respect to their Families, or to the Publick Society.

And 1st, as to their private Concerns. Let the Experience of all Men in all Ages speak out, and they would see, not only in Scripture, how the wisest and strongest of Men have been overcome, and ruin'd with extravagant Lust,

Lust; but they wou'd find much of the same in other Books. Or if they are not given to reading, if they wou'd but look about them in the World, especially in such an Age as this is, they cannot but see a multitude of sad Examples of those that have been ruin'd in like manner. Alas! how often do we our selves see that Observation of the Wise-Man verify'd to a tittle, Prov. 6. 26. that by means of a whorish Woman a Man is brought to a piece of Bread; And that the Adulteress hunts for the precious Life. The whole seventh Chapter also contains most admirable Observations to this purpose; amongst which the 22, 23, 26, and 27. Verses, are exceeding emphatical: There it is said of a *strange Woman* (so the Scripture calls the Woman that is not a Man's own Wife; but there it is especially spoken of a Street-walker) such a one meeting with a Young-man void of Understanding, he goes after her straitway, as an Oxe goeth to the Slaughter, or as a Fool to the Correction of the Stocks, till a Dart strike through his Liver, as a Bird hasteth to the Snare, and knoweth not that it is for its Life. She hath cast down many wounded, yea, many strong Men have been slain by her. Her House is the way to Hell, going down to the Chambers of Death.

2. Next, consider how Families are affected with the ill Consequents of this Vice, and we shall find that nothing does so fatally destroy the *Peace*, the *Interest*, and the *Succession* thereof, as the Sins of Uncleaness. And as to the *Peace* and *Comfort* of Families, I dare appeal to the very Whoremongers and Adulterers, whether they themselves would resent any thing as a higher Injury, and be more disturb'd upon any account, than to have their own Wives or Daughters debauch'd. And indeed, it is observable, That those very Persons who are most Infamous themselves for Corrupting of other Mens Wives and Daughters, are always the most Impatient and Outragious, when-ever those Misfortunes happen to the Dishonour of them, and their own Families.

The *Interest* also of the same is most highly concern'd both in the Chastity of the Wife, and of the Husband: Of the Wife, especially in great Families, since if her Chastity be not preserv'd, the Husband's Estate is in danger to be swept away from his own natural Off-spring. And then, as to the Husband, I believe it will be as soon granted as propos'd, that a Gentleman can with the third part of that Charge maintain a Virtuous Wife, and her Family, as a Whore, and her spu-

tious • Issue. The reason is, the Desires of the
 one are reasonable and regular, and consequently
 satisfy'd with moderate Expences ; the Appetites
 of the other are Loose, Extravagant, and Bound-
 less, and never to be sufficiently Gratify'd. Be-
 sides, the *Wife* reckons she spends of her own,
 and if she exceeds, her own Children are like
 to suffer for it. But for the *strange Woman*, she
 is usually like a Soldier that lives at discretion in
 the Enemies Country, She Hates, and believes
 she is hated, for she knows there is reason for
 it. Besides, she cannot forget she has a separate
 Interest from the Family of her Paramour, and
 therefore her business is to sell her self as dear as
 she can ; and if he gives her all that he has, it
 is less valuable than what she has given him.
 Moreover, possibly she has Children by him ;
 if not, yet at least she must provide for Old Age.
 All this while I am speaking but of one single
 Concubine, which no Lawless Man can content
 himself with, no more than he can with one Wife.
 And if he has many drawing upon him toge-
 ther, they will have sooner done their Work,
 which is to Beggar him and his Family. Such
 infinite reason, with respect to the *Interest* of Fa-
 milies, had the Wise-Man for that Caution of his,
Prov.

Prov. 5. 10. Remove thy way far from the strange Woman, and come not nigh the Door of her House, least Strangers be fill'd with thy Wealth, and thy Labours be in the House of a Stranger.

But then if we consider, how the Successions of Families are often extinguish'd by means of a Whorish Woman; and in what a terrible manner also this commonly happens, the last and only Hopes of many Families being cut off in a senseless impious Duel, fought upon the account of some Lewd Strumpet (the most usual Occasion thereof) this indeed is a Consideration that does not only bring down the *Gray Hairs* of the unhappy Parents *with Sorrow to the Grave*, but does also strike all that hear it with Horror; as well upon that score, as with respect to the fearful Sentence at God's Tribunal, which the miserable Debauchee is gone to receive.

Nor is it to be pass'd by as unworthy a serious Reflection, that though the utter Extinction of Noble Families does not every day happen on this occasion; yet every day we may see what Crasie and Sickly Constitutions are to many Successions derived down from the invenom'd Seed of one or other of the vitious Parents to their Innocent Children; so that it were happy for them, if the

Succession had sooner fail'd, and they had never seen the Sun. Oh therefore that Men wou'd weigh this, that tho' *the Lips of a strange Woman drop as the Honey-Comb, and her Mouth is smother than Oil; yet her End is bitter as Wormwood, sharp as a two-edg'd Sword. Her Feet go down to Death, her Steps take hold on Hell.* Prov. 5. 3, 4, 5.

And now lastly, as to those Mischiefs to the *Publick*, occasion'd frequently by the Sins of Uncleanness, without recurring to History, either Sacred or Prophane, (both which give us the Accounts of most bloody Wars, and utter Desolation brought upon whole Countries on the score of a Strumpet, or an Adulteress, and of the Divine Vengeance upon whole Nations for Crimes of this Nature, when become universally prevalent,) I shall content my self with laying before You those sad and fearful Effects of *Lewdness*, which may fall under our own Observation at this Day, to the very Country we now live in.

And it is not an inconsiderable Evil to the *Publick*, that so many Hundred Persons are Yearly Executed, some for *Murthers*, others for *Robberies*, others for *Theft* and *Burglary*; the greatest part of whom, upon Enquiry, will be found to have been

been entangled in the Snares of *Lewd Women*, or they had never brought their Heads into an Hal-tar. And it was but the last Sessions that I was my self amaz'd to see so many Young-Men, in the very Bloom of their Years, receive the Sentence of Death for the Crimes now mentioned. And speaking of it, with Concern, to one of the Judges, he told me it has been his Observation, since he came upon the Bench, That *Whoredom* has generally been the first Occasion of that which brought them to their unhappy End. For these Persons being strongly addicted to their Lusts, and yet of none, or of broken Fortunes, those lewd Women whom they Associate themselves withal, force them upon those violent means to feed their Lusts, which terminate thus in their utter Ruin.

But the grand Mischief and Bane of all to the Publick, as well as the high Dishonour to God, which arises from an Addictedness to the Sins of *Uncleanness*, is *Atheism* and *Infidelity*.

Now the Atheist is that *Leviathan* that taketh his Pastime upon the Earth. He knows no Law but his own Will, and therefore indulgeth himself in any Wickedness that he can safely commit; *Adulteries*, *Murther*, *Oppression*, and what-ever

ever else can be thought of that is monstrously flagitious, and highly mischievous, he perpetrates to choose. *He deviseth Mischief upon his Bed, he setteth himself in no good way, neither doth he abhor any thing that is Evil. He slayeth the Widow, and the Stranger, and murthers the Fatherless; yet he says, the Lord shall not see, neither shall the God of Jacob regard it, Psal. 94. 6, 7.*

Thus is the *Atheist* like some wild and savage Beast, which ravages and despoils the whole Voisenage round about him. But after he has perpetrated some horrible Villany, if you will take the pains to trace the mighty and mischievous Monster back to his Kennel, you will always lodge him in the Bed of Lust. It is there he first suckt in, and was nourish'd up in savage Principles: It is thence he issues out, the Mischief and Terror of all within his Compass.

And if you desire to know why a strong and habitual Addictedness to unlawful Pleasures should so fatally, and almost inevitably fix Men in Atheistical Principles; the Reason is, 1st, that Sensuality and Filthiness do, of all other Sins, send up such gross and foul Exhalations as must necessarily intercept our View of Heaven: And indeed these do so flag the Wings of a thinking, soaring Mind,

Mind, that the Powers and Faculties of the Soul can never rise higher than Sense and Matter. They do also so defile and muddy the Mind, that it can take in no Spiritual and Divine Ideas, which can be thoroughly impressed only upon pure and unsullied Intellect. . . 2^{dly}, And Sensual Pleasure being of all other sinful Courses the least patient of any Check or Controul, no sooner are Persons given up to the Gratification of their Lusts, but you shall find they immediately cast about for the best Arguments they can devise against those great and mighty Restraints to the same, which, even in their fullest Draughts of Pleasure, so often pall their Appetites, and chill their Blood; *namely*, the Being and Providence of God, the Immortality of the Soul, and a future Judgment, and indeed against the whole Christian Doctrine: And as they are resolved to *Live*, so they would fain perswade themselves they shall *Die, like the Beasts that perish*. . . And how apt Men are to believe, even against the clearest Evidence, what is strongly their Desire, and what they think is highly their Interest and Concern, should be true, we daily see; and those Persons especially we are speaking of, do fatally find, till a lingering Disease, Afflictions

or Calamities recall them back, and fix them down to serious Thoughts; and then, alas! most of them open their Eyes, and see their Errors when it is too late. Thus does *Atheism* and *Irreligion*, that Bane of Humane Societies, owe its Birth and its Growth to Sensual Pleasures.

And if so, if an Evil so highly mischievous to Publick Societies, as well as the Souls of Men, does derive its Being, and all its Force, from the Sins of *Uncleanness*; it ought then to be the especial Care of all Civil Societies to destroy the *Dam* that nourishes and breeds up so foul a Monster. *Principiis obsta* will be a ruling Maxim to all well-govern'd States; and therefore to strangle so fruitful a Parent of Mischief, as Sensual Lusts appear to be, does infinitely become the *WISDOM OF OUR NATION*.

In short, we are, or at least-wise profess ourselves to be Christians; and as the very original Design and Tendency of Christianity was towards nothing more than to extinguish the *Lusts of Concupiscence which did reign in the Gentiles, who knew not God*, 1 Thess. 4. 5. So we may as well renounce our Christianity it self, as give a National Favour, and publick Allowance to these Enormities; as the not passing of this *Bill* will,

I fear, by many, both at Home and Abroad, be interpreted no less.

One thing is most certain, That no Man can be against it upon the Account of *Religion*; for the Suppression of the Vices of *Uncleanness* is a part of Christianity, which Christians of all Denominations, if true to their Principles, can freely come up to. It is not here as in disputed Matters of Religion, with respect to which all are not agreed how far it may be fit for the secular Powers to interpose. But as all Parties of Christians will consent to have Immorality restrained; So the Immorality that is to be restrain'd by this *Bill*, by the Verdict of express Scripture, comes under the Cognizance of the Civil Magistrate; *It is an heinous Crime, yea, it is an Iniquity to be punished by the Judges, Job. 31. 11.* And that the Judges may have Law to Punish it by, is the Thing we humbly desire of our Legislators.

F. I. N. I. S.